13

The SENCE of the FRENCH CHURCH

Concerning the *Pope's* INFALLIBILITY *and* POWER

Lately declared by Aurhority.

TRINITY COLLEGE LIBRARY CAMBRIDGE

SInce the Bishop of *Rome* got so much Authority in the Catholick part of the World, as to be able by his Ministers and Negotiations to attempt to govern private Churches out of his own Metropolitan Diocesse, there has been wag'd a great War amongst Divines about the Quality of his Authority. And, as man's soul by her powers and operations is twofold, of Understanding and Will, speculation and practice; so the Divines questions. The Gates by which such tenets get entrance into the Church are two leav'd; the one opens to the Power the Pope has to command assent to his resolutions of speculative points; the other to what obedience is due to his commands. The party whose interest it is by application to the highest See to dilate their own priviledges and exemptions from the ordinary Government of the Church instituted by Christ, and received by continuall tradition to our dayes, have striven with all their might to possess the World, that both for assent to Christian Truths, and for regulating of Discipline, Christ had given all power to Saint *Peter* and his Successor; so that the whole Hierarchy in effect remain'd in him alone. The rest, as far as not infected by them, maintained constantly the contrary; and that, though the Pope was chief of Bishops, yet the Congregation of Bishops

was the Court from whence final resolutions were to be expected. The former tenet had of late gotten a great strength through the most parts of Christendome; but the Divine Providence, when it found it fitting, raised the *French* Church, which at the present is very flourishing, to set a bar to their great advance, as may be seen by the Papers here inserted.

The substance of the Advocate General's Plea against a Thesis defended in *Sorbon* concerning the Pope's *Infallibility*.

Translated out of the *French* Copy.

I Doe (sayes he) *acknowledge my careleſneſſe in having ſuffered to ſcape unpuniſhed thoſe horrible blaſphemies which the Ieſuits vomited out againſt Ieſus Chriſt, in a Theſis defended the laſt year in the Colledge of* Clermont, *which maintained that* the Pope was as infallible in matters both of fact and right as Jeſus Chriſt himſelf. *Has a greater impiety been heard of! But it is ordinary with them to teach erroneous Doctrines. And I believe 'tis from the impunity of that Crime that the boldneſſe has been taken to defend the like Errours in* Sorbon, *againſt her Statutes, the Doctrine of the* Gallican *Church, and the maxims of State and of this Court. How? That the Pope with five or ſix ignorant Divines with mercenary ſouls ſhould be infallible to make Articles of Faith of whatſoever Paſſion, Intereſt, or Ambition ſhall ſuggeſt to him. Our Anceſtors have ſeen the fatal conſequences and effects of this pernicious doctrine. Wherefore, leſt this poyſon ſhould ſpread it ſelf farther, and this pernicious doctrine take root if it be left unpuniſhed, I conclude the Theſis ſhall be ſtruck out & blotted; the Defendant & Preſident conſtrained to maintain the direct contrary, and the Syndic never to approve ſuch like Theſes under pain of being extraordinarily proceeded againſt. The Pope and Biſhops are not Authors of our Faith, but faithfull Guardians, and irrefragable Witneſſes of univerſal Tradition received from hand to hand, from Ieſus Chriſt to us; according to* Vincentius Lirinenſis: Quod ſemper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus creditum eſt, hoc de fide eſt, &c.

Notes

Notes upon it.

Thoſe who are acquainted with the Government of *France*, underſtand that the Parliament of *Paris* is made of Members given to Learning and reading of Fathers, and to the skill of Languages, particularly Greek and Latine, and by conſequence of Church Antiquities; and that the King's Advocate, who at this preſent is called Monſieur *Talon*, is ordinarily one of the moſt eminent; and that in matters of Divinity they are tenacious of the Decrees of the *Sorbon*, the greateſt Catholick Uniuerſity in our parts of the World, and whoſe Doctrine paſſeth for the Doctrine of the Church of *France*, eſpecially their *Ancient Decrees*.

It is again to be noted, that he ſaith that the Tenet of the Popes's *Perſonal Infallibility* in making Doctrines to be of new accepted for Articles of Faith, is againſt the maxims of the *French Government*; that is, that it toucheth upon Treaſon, which if it be true in *France*, it can be no leſſe true in *England*: and he cannot be truly loyall to his Countrey, who obſtinately maintaineth that Errour. The reaſon is clear: for, if that be true, the Pope may define and oblige Subjects to believe that he can depoſe a Prince, and bind his Subjects to take Armes againſt him, as was inſinuated in a Letter confidently reported to have been lately written from *Rome* to *Ireland*, by a great man of that Court; though others ſay the Letter was counterfeited.

Extracted out of a Letter written from France *to a Perſon of Quality.*

The Ieſuits having defended formerly that the Pope hath the ſame Infallibility with Jeſus Chriſt, *Monſieur* Talon *the Advocate General complained of it publickly in Parliament; remonſtrating that this was a moſt horrible impiety, and highly deſerving* open *and* corporal *puniſhment. Whereupon the Court of the ſaid Parliament has ordained, that the Preſident, the Regent, and the Schollars which maintained it, ſhould*

was the Court from whence final resolutions were to be expected. The former tenet had of late gotten a great strength through the most parts of Christendome; but the Divine Providence, when it found it fitting, raised the *French* Church, which at the present is very flourishing, to set a bar to their great advance, as may be seen by the Papers here inserted.

The substance of the Advocate General's Plea against a Thesis defended in *Sorbon* concerning the Pope's *Infallibility*.

Translated out of the *French* Copy.

I Doe (sayes he) *acknowledge my carelessesse in having suffered to scape unpunished those horrible blasphemies which the Iesuits vomited out against Iesus Christ, in a Thesis defended the last year in the Colledge of* Clermont, *which maintained that* the Pope was as infallible in matters both of fact and right as Jesus Christ himself. *Has a greater impiety been heard of! But it is ordinary with them to teach erroneous Doctrines. And I believe 'tis from the impunity of that Crime that the boldnesse has been taken to defend the like Errours in* Sorbon, *against her Statutes, the Doctrine of the* Gallican *Church, and the maxims of State and of this Court. How? That the Pope with five or six ignorant Divines with mercenary souls should be infallible to make Articles of Faith of whatsoever Passion, Interest, or Ambition shall suggest to him. Our Ancestors have seen the fatal consequences and effects of this pernicious doctrine. Wherefore, lest this poyson should spread it self farther, and this pernicious doctrine take root if it be left unpunished, I conclude the Thesis shall be struck out & blotted; the Defendant & President constrained to maintain the direct contrary, and the Syndic never to approve such like Theses under pain of being extraordinarily proceeded against. The Pope and Bishops are not Authors of our Faith, but faithfull Guardians, and irrefragable Witnesses of universal Tradition received from hand to hand, from Iesus Christ to us; according to* Vincentius Lirinensis: Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus creditum est, hoc de fide est, &c.

Noves

Notes upon it.

Thoſe who are acquainted with the Government of *France*, underſtand that the Parliament of *Paris* is made of Members given to Learning and reading of Fathers, and to the skill of Languages, particularly Greek and Latine, and by conſequence of Church Antiquities; and that the King's Advocate, who at this preſent is called Monſieur *Talon*, is ordinarily one of the moſt eminent; and that in matters of Divinity they are tenacious of the Decrees of the *Sorbon*, the greateſt Catholick Uuiverſity in our parts of the World, and whoſe Doctrine paſſeth for the Doctrine of the Church of *France*, eſpecially their *Ancient Decrees*.

It is again to be noted, that he ſaith that the Tenet of the Popes's *Perſonal Infallibility* in making Doctrines to be of new accepted for Articles of Faith, is againſt the maxims of the *French Government*; that is, that it toucheth upon Treaſon, which if it be true in *France*, it can be no leſſe true in *England*: and he cannot be truly loyall to his Countrey, who obſtinately maintaineth that Errour. The reaſon is clear: for, if that be true, the Pope may define and oblige Subjects to believe that he can depoſe a Prince, and bind his Subjects to take Armes againſt him, as was inſinuated in a Letter confidently reported to have been lately written from *Rome* to *Ireland*, by a great man of that Court; though others ſay the Letter was counterfeited.

Extracted out of a Letter written from France *to a Perſon of Quality.*

The Ieſuits having defended formerly that the Pope hath the ſame Infallibility with Jeſus Chriſt, *Monſieur* Talon *the Advocate General complained of it publickly in Parliament; remonſtrating that this was a moſt horrible impiety, and highly deſerving* open *and* corporal *puniſhment. Whereupon the Court of the ſaid Parliament has ordained, that the Preſident, the Regent, and the Schollars which maintained it, ſhould*

appear perſonally to receive a Reprehenſion for the firſt time, and a denouncing of corporal and publick puniſhment, intended and reſolved to be inflicted, in caſe any of them ſhould relapſe into the like blaſphemy hereafter.

Notes upon it.

The Theſis mentioned is that againſt which was divulged the Paper intituled, *The Ieſuits new Hereſie*: which inſinuates, that the Tenet of the Popes Infallibility was their *former Hereſie*; which is a gentle cenſure upon a doctrine able to introduce Hereſies without number into the Church of God; as is evident to whoſoever ſhall conſider how eaſie it is for a dozen of Divines to be either corrupted or deceived: And yet our Faith by this poſition is made to depend on their ſcience and integrity.

Note again, that the King's Advocate profeſſeth, that the Tenet of the Popes Infallibility in matters of Fact, deſerveth *publick and corporal puniſhment*; which ſignifies no leſſe than *whipping, baniſhment*, or ſome ſuch like puniſhment: and that it is a crime deſerving that the Civil Magiſtrate ought to take notice of it. This abſurdity was invented by the Jeſuits, in envy to the great Schollar *Ianſenius*; to the end that people might be perſwaded he held errours not viſible in his Books; of the which they calumniated him, and would prove him guilty of them onely by the Pope's Infallible word defining him to be ſo; which mad prank of theirs has made ſuch a pother in *France* of late yeares.

A Decree

A Decree of the Court of Parliament against A Theological conclusion, intended to have been maintain'd the 19 of *Ianuary* 166$\frac{2}{3}$ by Monsieur *Gabriel Droüet* of *Ville-nefue* Batchelor.

Given the 22 *of* Ianuary : 166$\frac{2}{3}$ *at* Paris.

Extracted out of the Registers of Parliament, and faithfully render'd into *English*.

THis day the Court having deliberated upon what was by the Kings Council represented the 19. and 20. of this present Moneth, concerning a Thesis intended to have been maintain'd the said 19. day by Monsieur Gabriel Droüet of Ville nefue in Britany, Batchelor in Divinity, at the Act call'd, The great Ordinary of Sorbon, which contain'd in its second Position; Christus Sanctum Petrum ejusque Successores summâ supra Ecclesiam Auctoritate donavit. Christ gave Saint Peter and his successors highest Authority over the Church. In its third, Romani Antistites Privilegia quibusdam Ecclesiis sicut Ecclesiæ Gallicanæ impertiunt. The Bishops of Rome bestow Priviledges upon certain Churches, as upon the French Church. In its eigth, Concilia Generalia ad extirpandas hæreses, schismata, & alia tollenda incommoda admodum sunt utilia, non tamen absolutè necessaria. General Councils are very profitable to extirpate Heresies and Schisms, and to take away other inconveniencies, but not absolutely necessary; and many other propositions contrary to the Authority of the Church, to the Antient Doctrine always received and conserved in this Kingdome, to the holy Canons, to the Decrees of General Councils, and to the Liberties of the Gallican Church, tending also to exalt the power of the Pope above that of General Councils, and beyond the limits which have always been most Religiously conserved in the Church of France: Having heard the Syndic of the faculty of Theology, and Monsieur Vincent de Meurs, Doctor in the said Faculty, of the Colledge of Navar,

Navar. *who was to preſide at the ſaid diſpute, and the ſaid* Droüet *the Reſpondent, who had all been ſent for in purſuance of the Decree of the 19. of this Moneth, as alſo having heard the King's Council in their Concluſions: The Court hath prohibited and forbidden, and doth prohibit and forbid the ſaid* Droüet *to defend the ſaid Theſis: Hath ordained, and doth ordain that it be ſuppreſt, together with all the reſt that ſhall be found to contain ſuch like propoſitions: Prohibits and forbids all Bachelors, Licenciats and Doctors and other perſons to write, defend, and diſpute, to read and teach directly or indirectly in the publick ſchooles or elſewhere any ſuch like, or other propoſitions contrary to the ancient doctrine of the Church, to the holy Canons, Decrees of General Councils, to the Liberties of the* Gallican Church, *and to the Ancient Decrees of the Faculty of Theology of* Paris; *under pain to be proceeded againſt according to their demerits.*

Prohibits the Syndic of the ſaid Faculty, and the Doctors who ſhall there preſide at the Acts, to ſuffer any ſuch propoſitions to be inſerted in any Theſis.

Ordains that this preſent Decree be read at the general Aſſembly of the ſaid Faculty of Theology to be holden in Sorbon *the firſt day which the Court ſhall command, in the preſence of two Counſellors of the ſaid Court; who, together with one of the Subſtitutes of the King's Atturney General, ſhall go thither expreſly for that purpoſe. To which Aſſembly ſhall be ſummoned all the Doctors of the ſaid Faculty, as alſo even the Batchelors of the firſt Licence. And this Decree ſhall be Regiſtred in the Regiſters of the ſaid Faculty, and ſignified to the Rectors, Deans, and Proctors of the other Faculties, there to be Read and Regiſtred, and ſent to other Univerſities, as alſo to the Bayliages and Stewardſhips of this Juriſdiction, there to be likewiſe Read, Publiſht, and Regiſtred by the procurement of the Subſtitutes of the King's Atturney General, who within one Moneth are to make Certificate thereof to the Court.*

Given in Parliament the 22 *Jan.* 166$\frac{2}{3}$

Signed, *Robert*

Collationed.

Notes upon it.

The errour of the first Proposition lies in the word *supra*, *above*; for the *French* Church holds the Pope to have the highest Authority in the Church; that is, over particular men, but not over the *whole Church*: for so it professed in the Council of *Trent* that it was the Faith of *France* received from the Councils of *Constance* and *Basil*, that a General Council is above the Pope, as also hath been practised by divers General Councils.

The errour of the second Proposition is, That the Priviledges of Ancient Churches (such as the *French* Church is) come from the Indulgence of the Pope, and not from the Succession to the Apostles and Apostolical Founders of them and their first institution. The form of which Churches is to be the Rule to all Christian Churches by whomsoever they are founded: nor is it lawfull to bring in new forms without violating Divine Right delivered in the constant Tradition of the Church.

The errour of the third Proposition consisteth in this, That it takes away the Practice of the Church, begun by the Apostles, and continued to the Council of *Trent*; is against manifest experience, and, in effect, takes away all efficacity of extinguishing Heresies and Shisms, reducing it to the weak principle of the Pope's Infallibility and extraordinary Power; of which enough is above delivered in proportion to these short Notes, to shew how dangerous the mentioned errours are, and how necessary to be condemned and avoided by all good Christians as pernicious both to Church and State.

Postscript.

Since the faregoing News, 'tis advertis'd that the contrary to the before condemned Theses hath been publickly defended by the Son of Monsieur Tallier, *one of the chief Ministers of State; the Arch-Bishop of* Paris *himself presiding.*